



[Jack Simons, 1907-1995](#)

Socialism and Nationalism

Jack Simons and Ray Alexander (they married in 1941) were two of the greatest communists South Africa has ever produced.

Ray Alexander's record as a trade union organiser was second to none. Her record as a founder of the Federation of South African Women is still the benchmark.

Jack Simons was a great scholar, from humble beginnings, and a great teacher. Jack Simons is the benchmark in political education. Samples of his contribution in this regard can be found in the book "**Comrade Jack - The Political Lectures and Diary of Jack Simons, Nova Catengue**", STE Publishers and the ANC, December 2001.

The Simons' most outstanding joint work is "[Class and Colour in South Africa, 1850-1950](#)", published when they were in exile (from which they both lived to return in 1990). Click on the title to access the full book on the ANC web site.

In this series on the NDR, the main post for this week was the selection from "**African Communists Speak**" (1981), a book full of verbatim documents. Our selection included the "Black Republic Thesis", and Moses Kotane's "Cradock Letter".

"Class and Colour" is a narrative, with footnotes indicating sources. Many people are named. "Jones" is David Ivon Jones, and "Andrews" is Bill Andrews. Other names will be more familiar.

This chapter covers the decade following the 1914-1918 inter-Imperialist war (The Great War).

This was the formative period of the Communist Party of South Africa, the African National Congress, and the black trade union movement; and the course was set from that time which continues in the form of the National Democratic Revolutionary Alliance that still exists today.

Illustration: Cover of "Comrade Jack", a book that includes political lectures Jack Simons gave in Angola.

- The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [Class and Colour, C10, Socialism and Nationalism, Simons and Simons](#).
- To download any of the CU courses in PDF files [please click here](#).